

Welcome to the National Trading Standards (NTS) Scam Marshal Newsletter: March 2022

Total Scam Marshals across the UK: 2,143



**NATIONAL
TRADING
STANDARDS**
Scams Team

The Aftermath of Severe Weather



Beware of rogue traders after storms

Householders are warned to beware of cold callers – roofers and other tradespeople who knock on their door uninvited – with offers to clear up damage following the recent severe weather.

Trading Standards Officers urge residents to always reject offers of work and goods by cold callers but rather to source their own contractors using legitimate websites or schemes.

Experience from similar events tells us that rogue traders will often target areas which have been affected by storms or severe weather, such as the devastating floods last year.

They will often knock on the door and say that something needs fixing urgently, such as loose roof tiles, garden maintenance or fence fixing.

Trading Standards advise those concerned about storm damage and wanting to have their properties checked, that there is a government-endorsed scheme called *Buy With Confidence* that can help you to find a tradesperson.

Cryptocurrency Scam



More than £4m has been returned to the victims of a global cryptocurrency scam after specialist officers in Manchester acted on intelligence to track down two suspects - and police say £7m is yet to be claimed.

150 victims have come forward so far. They are being verified and money is being returned to them. If you or someone you know may have fallen victim to a cryptocurrency scam, email OpGabbro@gmp.police.uk with the details of the scam - you may be able to get some money back!

Growing problem

The arrests follow a report by MPs that warned the government was failing to do enough to stop "pernicious scammers" ripping off innocent consumers with fraudulent online adverts, impersonation scams and dodgy crypto investments.

Detective Chief Inspector Joe Harrop has urged anyone involved in these cryptocurrency and trading services to take extreme caution and do a lot of research as there are still huge risks. He also urged other potential victims of the scam to come forward.

To learn more about scams, visit www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk

Are you or is someone you know feeling overwhelmed by unwanted marketing contact from a charity? The *Fundraising Preference Service* is a free service that can help you end contact with any charity registered in England, Wales or Northern Ireland: www.fundraisingpreference.org.uk

Call Blocker Report; Top Scam types



The NTS Scams Team have been working with a company called trueCall since 2016 by facilitating the supply and fitting of valuable call blocking technology to some of the most scam susceptible consumers in the UK.

Of the numbers investigated:

- 35% were identified as white goods warranty scams.
- The second highest was tech support scams, with 16%.
- Subscription scams which largely purport to be calling from Amazon, make up the top three with 8% of calls made.

Which? Stamp Out Scams Campaign

Criminals are stealing hundreds of millions of pounds from innocent victims every year, bombarding us with fraudulent texts, emails, and phone calls. And not all banks and businesses are doing enough to stop it. Which? are demanding they do more – and are acting to protect you through the Which? scam alert service.

Sign-up for the scam alert service and Which? will send you regular updates on new scams they come across – so you can stay one step ahead of the criminals!

<https://campaigns.which.co.uk/scam-alert-service/>

You can also sign the petition here to demand banks and businesses protect us from scams:

<https://campaigns.which.co.uk/scams/>

Criminals often use bank transfer scams to con victims out of their money. In 2019 alone, the UK public lost a staggering £317m through these scams – that's £860k a day.



Clairvoyant Scams

The most common type of scam mail we still receive from our Scam Marshals are clairvoyant scams.

Psychic and clairvoyant scams happen when a criminal approaches you to tell you they have seen something either wonderful or terrible in your future. They ask for money in order to provide a full report about it or sometimes to provide a 'lucky charm' for protection.

The apparently psychic or clairvoyant criminals approach their victims by email, post, telephone call or even face-to-face.

They may tell you that you are in some kind of trouble but that they can offer a solution in return for payment. They may claim to be able to give you winning lottery numbers, or offer to remove a curse.

The criminals tend to ask for an administration fee for their services.

If you believe fraud has been committed, report it to Action Fraud: www.actionfraud.police.uk



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